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## Stem Cell Agency Board Member and Researcher Honored by ALS Association

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San Francisco, CA – Patient advocate Diane Winokur and Nobel Prize winning stem cell researcher Dr. Shinya Yamanaka are being honored for their outstanding efforts in the areas of scientific research, philanthropy and public awareness. The award comes from the ALS Association Golden West Chapter and the Robert Packard Center for ALS Research at John Hopkins, two organizations committed to raising awareness about and finding treatments for Amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS) or Lou Gehrig's disease.

Winokur is a member of the stem cell agency's governing Board, the Independent Citizens Oversight Committee (ICOC), as a patient advocate for ALS and MS. She is also a governing board member of the Robert Packard Center for ALS Research at John Hopkins. She is getting the Lifetime Achievement Award for her personal and professional achievements in advancing the landscape of ALS research.

"Our goal at the stem cell agency is to find new treatments and cures for a wide range of diseases, including ALS," says Jonathan Thomas, JD, PhD, Chair of the ICOC. "Diane is now an integral and valued part of that cause. We have witnessed first hand her deep commitment to raising awareness about ALS and to working tirelessly as a patient advocate for all Californians. She is truly deserving of this honor."

Dr. Yamanaka won the 2012 Nobel Prize for his pioneering work in transforming adult skin cells into embryonic-like stem cells. This groundbreaking discovery is opening new prospects for drug discovery, personalized medicine and tissue regeneration. Dr. Yamanaka works at a lab at the Gladstone Institutes in San Francisco, which gets funding from the stem cell agency.

"We are proud to be able to boast a long friendship with Shinya," says Alan Trounson, PhD, President of CIRM. "He is a truly inspirational figure in stem cell research and his Nobel prize-winning pioneering work is helping change the face of medicine."

The awards will be presented at a Gala Celebration on Friday, April 26th at the Four Seasons Hotel, 757 Market Street in San Francisco. The event begins with a cocktail reception at 5:30p and will include live music, gourmet food, entertainment and a silent auction. Proceeds from the evening will provide funding for the ALS Golden West Chapter and establish the Winokur Family Research Initiative, which will fund promising early stage research.

For more information about the event or to buy tickets go to the ALS Association Golden West Chapter's website.

**About CIRM:** CIRM was established in November 2004 with the passage of Proposition 71, the California Stem Cell Research and Cures Act. The statewide ballot measure, which provided \$3 billion in funding for stem cell research at California universities and research institutions, was overwhelmingly approved by voters, and called for the establishment of an entity to make grants and provide loans for stem cell research, research facilities, and other vital research

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